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Hay fever x x x x x



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HAY FEVER; THE BEST TREATMENT FOR STAY-AT-HOMES.

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“Hay Fever,” as a name for the affection with which it is associated, is, we all recognize, a very defective one. I use it because I know of no better.

In the few remarks I propose to make upon this affection, I suppose all local causes of nasal stenosis and irritation to have been removed.

The cases I report will be mostly those that have been under my observation for one or more seasons, unable for different reasons to visit the usual resorts of “hay fever” sufferers, and who have had all forms of treatment with no permanent relief.

Mrs. H., married, housekeeper, age twenty-four years, no children, has had “hay fever” for six years. This is the third year I have treated her. The trouble began this year as usual, August 15th. I saw her August 17th. The nasal symptoms were well advanced, and the eye symptoms just beginning. As in the two previous years, in which she has been under my observation, I gave her syrup hypophosphites early in the summer. I gave her August 17th a small capsule of valerianic ether to prevent any ill effects from the cocaine solution with which I sprayed her nose. The cocaine, of course, shrinks all engorged tissue, and produces local anesthesia. I then twisted on a slender nasal applicator some absorbent cotton, and dipped it into a 50% solution of chromic acid; this I applied the full length of both inferior turbinal bones, the lower half of the middle turbinals, and the lower two-thirds of each side of the septum. In two or three minutes I washed the nostrils well with an alkaline solution, and sprayed them with a mixture of eucalyptol, camphor, cocaine (alkaloid), and vaseline. I gave her a wash to use so long as the secretion was excessive, containing aqua eucalyptol, aqua camphor, and distilled extract hamamelis, equal parts; under this treatment the symptoms were much worse that day, but better the next. This treatment occasionally has to be repeated once, very occasionally twice, during the season. I afterwards gave Mrs. H. valerianate zinc and extract nux vomica.



This treatment usually prevents the asthma and cough. Should the latter cause much trouble, I find nothing proves so harmless and so effective as codeine phosphate. So far this year she is quite comfortable.

Mr. G., railroad manager, had his first attack September, 1894. This year it began August 10th. I saw him first August 14th, 1896. His general health seems to be good. I found him suffering very much, unable to attend to his business, could not sleep at all, nose completely occluded, no asthma or cough, but his eyes disturb him very much. After cocaineizing his nose thoroughly, I found no hypertrophied tissue, but the nose very narrow and the turbinal bones very small. I made an application of a 25% solution of chromic acid and washed it out well in a few minutes with an alkali; then used the vaseline mixture in a spray. I gave him the same wash Mrs. H. is using, giving him also zinc phosphide and extract nux vomica internally. He reported next day much improved; had slept well. This improvement continued until Friday, August 21st, when he reported with an exacerbation; another application of the acid was made, since when he has been quite comfortable, attending his business without trouble. His eye symptoms persisted a few days, when I gave him acid boric, 5*ii*, aqua camphor and aqua rosa, *aa* 5*iii*, distilled extract hammamelis *q. s.* 5*viii*, as an eye bath; he used it in a glass eye bath four times a day and soon got relief. He complained of little or no discomfort from the acid.

Mr. G., a contractor, has had the above treatment for four years, with entire relief. Before I began treating him he had to leave the State every summer. I removed some hypertrophies from both nostrils and a ridge of bone the first year I treated him. Mr. G. works in a great deal of dust. He commences early in the spring, as he has mild "rose fever," on the zinc phosphide and extract nux vomica, and the wash of eucalyptol, hamamelis and aqua camphor. The acid application gives him one day of discomfort, after which he returns to his work in dust and dirt with no discomfort. He uses the eye bath also.

Mrs. H., married, weighs 253 pounds; has a baby about once a year; has asthma about one-half of the year; has violent exacerbations which can be relieved by weak chromic acid applications to the nose, and phosphate of codeine internally. During "hay fever" season Mrs. H. has one and sometimes two applications of the chromic acid, which give her great comfort. She uses the wash previously mentioned and valerianate of zinc; this latter I have been using in these cases for some years, with great benefit, I think; I sometimes give the three valerianates.

So far this season I have had but one patient, a Sister of Mercy, who has not gotten relief from the treatment given above. She came in late in the season, with asthma and a bad cough. I had never treated her before. Her nose is exceedingly contracted; healthy turbinals nearly produce total stenosis. With the slightest engorgement she cannot breathe through her nose at all. Cocaine will not reduce this engorgement now. I refer to the case as one impossible to relieve without the aid of surgery.

Only Sunday last—September 6, 1896—Mr. G., a merchant, who has just returned from a trip to Alaska, came to see me with an attack of "hay fever." This is the third year I have treated him. I made the chromic acid application, and have seen him twice since; he is much improved. It has always relieved him before.

September 1, 1896, Mr. S., of Augusta, Ga., called to see me, suffering intensely with "hay fever." I never saw a man more uncomfortable. No asthma, but head symptoms well marked. He has had "hay fever" for fifteen years. I gave him the usual treatment, and that same day he was called to New York on business. For four days and nights he was so uncomfortable he could neither eat nor sleep. He stopped all treatment, both local and internal. From a description of his symptoms he afterwards wrote me, he must have had mild sepsis. After the fourth day he began to eat. An extract from his letter, given below, shows the progress of his case from that date. His right nostril is nearly completely occluded by a deviated septum. I advised a correction of this.

Mr. S. writes September 9th as follows:

"I have not sneezed as many as half a dozen times in any one day. I have no itching sensation in the eyes, ears or nostrils, and I sleep at night without discomfort, and as a healthy man should do. I breathe freely through both nostrils; the discharge of clotted blood and mucus has greatly diminished, and the bleeding of the right nostril has almost entirely ceased. Ordinarily, this is the time that the fever is reaching its climax. I do not know whether it is coming back or not. It almost passes belief that I am free of it at this time."

For the asthma I have found ten or fifteen grains of bromide or salicylate of quinine at bedtime gives great relief. Also glyceride of hydriotic acid is very good. When there is a gouty element urotropine is of service. Mixtures containing lobelia, the bromides and the iodides are of much service; of course when the asthma is very severe, morphia and atropia act very promptly.

To summarise then, for "hay fever" sufferers who have to stay at home, I believe greatly in constitutional treatment, such as the valeria-

nates, the hypophosphites, zinc phosphite, anti-rheumatics, and in the correction of any gouty element.

Locally, the removal of all causes of nasal stenosis and irritation, with persistent cleansing with mild saline, acid and alkaline solutions. Just before, at the beginning, or in the midst of the season, I apply, as given above, chromic acid, and follow this with such medication as indicated in the body of this paper. But few of my patients have any discomfort, except for a few hours, from the treatment, which occasionally has to be repeated, and they are thus enabled to stay at home and attend to business with very little or no comfort. The chromic acid, as in Mr. S.'s case, sometimes gives great discomfort. Much of his discomfort, though, came from his neglect of treatment. Even with this four or five days of discomfort the result of the treatment more than counterbalances the many uncomfortable days of the "hay fever" sufferer, if a stay-at-home.

